申 訴 專 員 公 署
Office of The Ombudsman

主 動 調 查 行 動 報 告
Direct Investigation Operation Report

房 屋 署 對 公 共 屋 邨 的 管 理 ： 違 例 泊 車

Housing Department’s Management of Public Housing Estates: Illegal Parking

報 告 完 成 日 期 ： 2025 年 3 月 11 日
Completion Date: 11 March 2025

報 告 公 布 日 期 ： 2025 年 3 月 13 日
Announcement Date: 13 March 2025

CONTENTS

Chapter		*Paragraph*
1	*INTRODUCTION*	
	Background	*1.1 – 1.3*
	Process of Investigation	*1.4 – 1.5*
2	*ENFORCEMENT WORK OF HOUSING DEPARTMENT (“HD”)*	
	Purview of HD	*2.1 – 2.2*
	Duties of Security/Management Service Contractors	*2.3 – 2.4*
	Other Measures against Illegal Parking	*2.5 – 2.6*
3	*CASE STUDIES AND SITE INSPECTIONS*	*3.1*
	Case Studies	*3.2 – 3.6*
	Other Public Housing Estates with Similar Situation	*3.7 – 3.15*
4	*COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS*	
	Overall Comments	*4.1 – 4.3*
	Recommendations	*4.4*
	Acknowledgements	*4.5*

1

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

1.1 Currently, there are 195 public rental housing ("PRH") estates in Hong Kong, with more than 780,000 households and about two million residents[1]. The Housing Department ("HD") is responsible for the day-to-day management of estates and handles a wide range of issues, including objects dropped from height, noise nuisance, water dripping from air-conditioners, unauthorised building works and smoking offences. Illegal parking is one of the common problems.

1.2 As proper management of public housing is a vital livelihood issue, this Office has decided to probe into it. Given the broad scope, we will initiate direct investigation operations into various aspects of public housing management in phases. This direct investigation operation focuses on illegal parking.

1.3 From time to time, this Office takes note of public complaints and media reports about illegal parking in PRH estates, where many vehicles illegally parked on restricted roads for lengthy periods of time and overnight. Particularly, we are concerned about illegal parking along emergency vehicular access, which might hinder the access of emergency vehicles and rescues in the event of contingencies. The Ombudsman considers urgent attention required to probe the problem of illegal parking in PRH estates. Hence, we notified HD on 17 December 2024 of the launch of a direct investigation operation pursuant to section 7(1)(a)(ii) of The Ombudsman Ordinance (Cap. 397) to examine in depth and extensively HD's management and enforcement mechanism against illegal parking in its PRH estates. Where necessary, pertinent recommendations will be made for improvement.

PROCESS OF INVESTIGATION

1.4 This Office has examined relevant information and conducted multiple site

---

1 Not including residents of Buy-or-Rent Option and Tenants Purchase Scheme.

inspections in specific PRH estates.

1.5 On 19 February 2025, we issued a draft investigation report to HD for comment, and received its reply on 7 March 2025. Upon considering and duly incorporating its comments as appropriate, we completed this final report on 11 March 2025.

2

ENFORCEMENT WORK OF HD

PURVIEW OF HD

2.1 In PRH estates, some roads are designated to be restricted roads. Depending on actual circumstances, HD staff and the authorised officers (such as security guards) of car park management and property services agents may impound or tow away any illegally parked vehicles[2]. HD staff are also empowered to issue a fixed penalty notice ("FPN"), which carries a penalty of $320, to the relevant vehicle owner[3]. In practice, they will issue a verbal or written warning, or take enforcement action without warning based on circumstantial or operational needs.

2.2 Moreover, through patrolling and education, HD calls on motorists to refrain from illegal parking in PRH estates, so as to avoid obstruction of traffic or emergency vehicular access. For example, HD displays conspicuous notices and banners with such wording as "No illegal parking" and "Vehicle will be impounded without warning", steps up patrolling locations where illegal parking is prevalent, and deploys the Mobile Operations Unit to carry out blitz operations issuing FPNs outside the office hours of the Estate Offices. Where necessary, HD will conduct joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force ("HKPF"). At suitable locations along the road sections in PRH estates where illegal parking is prevalent, the Estate Offices will also implement temporary measures, such as placing concrete bollards and fences, to prevent vehicles from parking there, thereby alleviating the issue.

DUTIES OF SECURITY/MANAGEMENT SERVICE CONTRACTORS

---

[2] To reclaim a vehicle, the charges payable under section 25B(4) of the Housing Ordinance and section 30 of the Housing (Traffic) By-laws (Cap. 283A) shall be:
(a) for impounding a vehicle, $320;
(b) for removing a vehicle, $420;
(c) for storing a vehicle, $110 for every day after the first day during which the vehicle is detained.

[3] Security guards are not empowered under the law to issue FPNs.

2.3 Security guards are employed by security/management service contractors ("Contractors"), and the Contractors' performance is monitored by HD staff. In the day-to-day management, HD staff supervise and ensure the Contractors' effective performance of contractual duties through daily monitoring, surprise inspections and regular meetings with their management staff. HD's senior district management also conducts surprise inspections in PRH estates regularly to appraise the Contractors' performance. In addition, the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HKHA") engages independent consultants to conduct telephone surveys quarterly with a random sample of PRH tenants and collect their ratings on the Contractors' performance.

2.4 If default of contractual requirements or negligence is found on the part of Contractors, HD will issue advisory or warning letters to the Contractors as appropriate, which will be reflected in their performance scores. For Contractors whose performance is persistently unsatisfactory without signs of improvement, HD's Contractors Review Committee will take regulatory action of varying degrees based on the circumstances, including suspension or restriction of their eligibility to tender, or even removal of their names from HD's approved list. Under HKHA's tendering system, good performance scores are a fundamental requirement for the renewal of existing service contracts. When Contractors tender for new contracts, their past performance under HKHA's contracts is one of the considerations in the tender evaluation.

OTHER MEASURES AGAINST ILLEGAL PARKING

2.5 To step up enforcement against illegal parking, HD has installed additional closed-circuit television ("CCTV") systems in some PRH estates, specially for monitoring and video recording of road situations, thereby facilitating remote surveillance of traffic by the Estate Offices in real time and enhancing staff's enforcement effectiveness. Given the development of innovative technologies, HD has also piloted Internet of Things ("IoT") sensors on specific road sections in certain PRH estates. Whenever illegal parking occurs, the sensors will send real-time data to the e-accounts of the Estate Offices and the smartphones, so that the staff can keep track of the latest situations and take proper action.

2.6 Moreover, HD is actively promoting smart estate management. Various innovative technologies, including IoT sensors and artificial intelligence, will be introduced in ten pilot estates, which can convert different situations (such as illegal parking, flooding, etc.) into digital data for real-time analysis and processing, thus enabling timely response to these situations by management staff. Besides, several

PRH estates are piloting a new mobile application system for daily patrol. Through the mobile application and dedicated mobile devices, frontline security guards can report situations found during patrols, including illegal parking, and upload photos and relevant information for record purposes to facilitate timely follow-up action by the Estate Offices.

3

CASE STUDIES AND SITE INSPECTIONS

3.1 In this direct investigation operation, this Office has examined HD's enforcement against illegal parking in PRH estates and selected four estates[4], namely Yau Oi Estate, Cheung Hong Estate, Lai Yiu Estate and Queens Hill Estate, for site inspections. Our observations are as follows.

CASE STUDIES

Yau Oi Estate

3.2 Allegedly, illegal parking is prevalent on certain road sections in Yau Oi Estate, where many vehicles are even parked illegally overnight. In this connection, HD has specifically strengthened road controls outside office hours (i.e. between 6 pm on Mondays to Fridays and 9 am on the following day, and 24 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays). Apart from enforcement in collaboration with the Mobile Operations Unit, HD has also enlisted the support of HKPF on a case-by-case basis to conduct joint operations for greater deterrence.

3.3 Between January and December 2024, a total of 389 enforcement operations against illegal parking were carried out, of which nearly 80% or 307 were outside office hours. HD issued a total of 1,925 FPNs and impounded 303 vehicles. More than 95% of the FPNs were issued and 65% of the vehicles were impounded outside office hours.

3.4 According to HD, there is a large elderly population and many wheelchair users in the estate, who often need to be transported by relatives and friends for medical

[4] Due to various geographical and environmental constraints of these PRH estates, certain road sections are not equipped with vehicle barrier gate systems, resulting in difficulty controlling vehicular access.

appointments or meals, and escorted to and from their homes. Moreover, there are also school buses transporting pupils and delivery vehicles catering for people's livelihoods. These drivers usually enter the estate boundaries to park their vehicles temporarily, and frontline enforcement staff will handle the short-term parking of these vehicles in a sensible and considerate manner.

3.5 Besides, the extensive area of Yau Oi Estate with many branch roads creates significant challenges for road management. As a result of HD's commitment to improvement and continuous efforts over the months, since mid-August 2024, the vast majority of vehicles often parked illegally on the estate's restricted roads have nearly disappeared. The situation of illegal parking has been alleviated, with a significant drop of more than 80% from the peak in the number of FPNs issued and vehicles impounded during enforcement operations. HD would continue to enforce the law stringently and impartially.

3.6 The geographical situation of Yau Oi Estate is unique, as its main public road, Yau Oi Road, is so designed that the vehicular lanes and the Light Rail Transit tracks are running parallel through Yau Oi Estate. As a result, not all road access points of the estate are equipped with vehicle barrier gate systems to facilitate road management. To enhance the effectiveness of road controls, the Estate Office has acquired more immobilisation devices. On a need basis, the security service contractor deploys 40% more security guards dedicated to patrolling estate roads and enforcement. The Estate Office has also installed an additional CCTV system especially for monitoring and video recording of road situations to facilitate the remote surveillance of traffic by staff in real time. The IoT sensors are piloted on specific road sections, which send real-time data on illegal parking to the smartphones of staff, so that they can keep track of the latest situations and take proper action.

OTHER PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES WITH SIMILAR SITUATION

3.7 In January 2025, this Office conducted two night-time inspections in other PRH estates, namely Cheung Hong Estate, Lai Yiu Estate and Queens Hill Estate, where the installation of vehicle barrier gate systems at all road access points is also infeasible due to geographical constraints.

Cheung Hong Estate

3.8 Cheung Hong Estate covers an extensive area with five road access points. Vehicle barrier gate systems are installed at three access points, but not on the remaining

two branch roads due to road width constraints. During our night-time inspection for about 30 minutes in Cheung Hong Estate, we found 30 vehicles suspected to be illegal parked on the roadside, but did not encounter any patrolling security guards. Nor did we see any FPNs or warning slips affixed to the windscreens of the non-compliant vehicles.

3.9 According to HD's records, a total of 208 FPNs were issued against illegal parking and 185 vehicles were impounded in Cheung Hong Estate between January and December 2024.

Lai Yiu Estate

3.10 In Lai Yiu Estate, vehicle barrier gate systems are installed at four of the five road access points, but not on the branch road leading to Wah Yiu House due to road width constraints similar to those in Cheung Hong Estate. During our night-time inspection for 45 minutes in Lai Yiu Estate, we found alleged illegal parking of more than 30 vehicles on the roadside, including one near the emergency vehicular access. While we encountered patrolling security guards during the inspection, they did not take enforcement action against illegal parking. Nor did we see any FPNs or warning slips affixed on the windscreens of the non-compliant vehicles.

3.11 HD explained that security guards are tasked with multiple duties and might not handle the situation of illegal parking immediately. According to HD's records, no FPNs were issued against illegal parking and 264 vehicles were impounded in Lai Yiu Estate between January and December 2024.

Queens Hill Estate

3.12 Queens Hill Estate is served by a public transport terminus, a taxi stand, a green minibus terminus, etc. The traffic flow is high on Lung Ma Road and Lung Chun Road used by public transport vehicles. Moreover, the community complex and car park in the estate, two primary schools and a housing estate under the Home Ownership Scheme in the vicinity are also accessible by vehicles via Lung Ma Road or Lung Chun Road. To avoid blocking Sha Tau Kok Road and affecting public transport, the estate's access points on Lung Ma Road and Lung Chun Road are not equipped with vehicle barrier gate systems.

3.13 During our 30-minute night-time inspection in Queens Hill Estate, we found 20 vehicles suspected to be illegal parked on the roadside, but did not encounter any patrolling security guards. Nor did we see any FPNs or warning slips affixed to the

windscreens of the non-compliant vehicles.

3.14 According to HD's records, a total of 31 FPNs were issued against illegal parking and 181 vehicles were impounded in Queens Hill Estate between January and December 2024.

3.15 HD has kept statistics on the FPNs issued and vehicles impounded in all three PRH estates aforesaid, but only compiled statistics on the written warnings on a need basis.

4

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERALL COMMENTS

4.1 Due to geographical and environmental constraints, specific roads in some PRH estates not equipped with vehicle barrier gate systems are prone to illegal parking, which is more prevalent outside office hours and undoubtedly poses a challenge to the road management work of frontline staff. Not only would it obstruct residents, but it might also hinder the access of emergency vehicles in the event of contingencies, causing delay in rescues and dire consequences.

4.2 This Office recognises that estate management is closely related to people's livelihood and covers a wide range of issues. The relevant staff are also tasked with essential duties and heavy workloads. Nevertheless, given the prolonged illegal parking of many vehicles at night time (see **paras. 3.8, 3.10 and 3.13**), some of which might affect emergency vehicular access (see **para. 3.10**), we consider that improvement is required for the situation.

4.3 As shown in the case of Yau Oi Estate, strengthening enforcement is conducive to alleviating the situation of illegal parking (see **para. 3.5**). Further observation is required to evaluate the effectiveness of other measures, such as additional CCTV surveillance and application of innovative technologies (see **para. 3.6**). Overall, this Office considers there is room for improvement on the part of HD in handling illegal parking and stepping up enforcement, in particular to ensure that emergency vehicular access is unobstructed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4.4 In this light, The Ombudsman recommends that HD:

(1) continue to closely monitor the situation of illegal parking in PRH estates (see **para. 4.1**), especially on roads where the installation of vehicle barrier gate systems is infeasible, and formulate effective enforcement strategies;

(2) step up enforcement against blackspots of illegal parking (see **para. 3.5**);

(3) take enforcement action against illegal parking along emergency vehicular access immediately without warning, including impounding or towing away the vehicles (see **para. 3.10**);

(4) strengthen collaboration with HKPF to arrange joint operations for greater deterrence and increasing the non-compliance costs of offenders if necessary (see **para. 3.2**);

(5) step up monitoring the follow-up actions taken by Contractors, consider stipulating key performance indicators for Contractors under their services contracts and requiring them to report enforcement results regularly (see **para. 3.6**);

(6) consider compiling statistics and analysing the records of written warnings against illegal parking issued by the Estate Offices to facilitate their monitoring of illegal parking by frontline staff, with a view to supervising staff and reallocating resources where necessary (see **para. 3.15**);

(7) conduct timely review on the effectiveness and results of the pilot use of CCTV surveillance and IoT sensors (see **para. 2.5**);

(8) if the results of pilot arrangement are positive, proactively explore expanding the pilot arrangement to more PRH estates to facilitate effective detection by frontline staff of illegal parking (see **paras. 2.5 and 2.6**);

(9) organise sharing sessions and training for the Estate Offices and security service contractors regarding enforcement against illegal parking from time to time;

(10) review existing manpower and, according to actual circumstances, explore any need to internally redeploy or obtain additional resources for enforcement;

(11) step up publicity and education for motorists, stressing the importance of refraining from illegal parking on emergency vehicular access (see **para. 2.2**); and

(12) draw up an implementation timetable for the above recommendations and conduct regular reviews.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

4.5 The Ombudsman thanks HD for full cooperation in the course of this investigation.

Office of The Ombudsman
Ref: DI/478
March 2025

We will post the case summary of selected investigation reports on social media from time to time. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to get the latest updates.

Facebook.com/Ombudsman.HK

Instagram.com/Ombudsman_HK